

Intolerable oppression both in Presbyteriall Government, and the Common-wealth: allowed by the Parliament, & presented to the Army, with these particulars:

1. A plaine mans answer to the eight Queres, which were proposed by the House of Commons to the Assembly of Divines, (April 22, 1646.) because they themselves could never be able to answer them.
2. The Parliaments great injustice and double-dealing, both in maintaining those looth-sayers, contrarie to the practice of the verie Heathen, (when they perceived such kind of men could not interpret their dreames, like *Daniel*) and also in following their wicked counsell, by setting up a golden Image of humane Religion, and a painted Altar of pretended Reformation.
3. If any should go forth against that renowned and victorious ARMY, it cannot (in any equity) be the sober sort of young-men nor Apprentices of London, nor yet their parents, friends, nor Masters, because many thousands of them have spent their blood and states in the late Warres alreadie; but it must needs be, that blacke tribe of English Priests, because it is only their turne, they being too easily, safely, and idly kept all these heavy times, to act mischief at home.
4. If the Citie will foolishly try at the dice of warres, their millions with the Armies shillings, even whether they shall have the Armies horses, buffe-coats, scarfs and armour, or the Army enjoy all their treasures, riches, apparell, and other both unspeakable and unvaluable plunder, once to make them wise and sober, (if not, their daintie wives and daughters also before their eyes,) yea and endanger the burning of the Citty to ashes, for their hainous sins; let them even run their courses.

Dan. 2. 9, 11, 12, 46, 47. &c. 1. Cor. 1. 19, 20, 27, 28, 29. Ioh. 10. 1. 5. 26, &c.

BEFORE the beginning of this Parliament, manie were in hopefull expectation of a worthy, modell of the Church of Christ, to have brought from his glorious Gospell, which was first taught at Jerusalem, and not to have had any other pattern, like the Altar, which was been brought from Damascus, but as it was by many others also feared, now it hath in the own colours appeared, as both by the people of a Warrant from a parish Church from Lancashire, and divers instances and circumstances hereafter following may be perceived.

A

We

We looked to have been freed from all Prelaticall oppression, but behold, farre greater, under the Presbyterian notion, besides hundreds of strange and bitter novelties, which I intend not here to expresse; for not onely doth every Parish Priest, and his Lay-Elders (as he is pleased to call them) warne in all persons of whatsoever estate or degree, without any kind of exception, either of King or Kaser, Lord, Knight, Queen, Countesse, Lady or other, above twelve years of age, not only to his preaching and prayer, but to his severall examinations, when they are not frequently there, yea, and to stand up publikly in their pews, and be examined so often as it pleaseth him every year, or else to issue forth such a Warrant for their appearance, as is hereafter mentioned.

What is this, I pray you, but a dreg or a relique of grosse Popery, (though a little fined and sugered by the Presbyterie) even proceeding from auricular confession? yea, it is far worse in this respect, seeing this examination is publike before all neighbours, and others, who are in the publike Assembly, both to heare, see, and carry away the newes: but the other is only privately spoken (or rather whispered) in the eare, and that not in many men, women, nor childrens eares, but in the Priests alone; onely he may (if hee will, or at least have licence or pardon from the Pope) declare and divulge it to whom he pleaseth, if the parties benevolence, who are so abused and misled, be not powerfull enough to stop his mouth.

To every one of those persons onely whom he judgeth fit both by their publike answering his questions, to receive the Sacrament of the Lords Supper, and by other tokens also to win his favour and commendation, he ordereth his Elders (which formerly were called Church-Wardens) to give a token, made either of stamped lead or sealed paper, with some letters of his name therein, to signifie his assent of their admission to the Sacrament, which they must either very carefully keep, or else buy or procure, and deliver at the Church-door, with their oblation too, before they enter in, or at least have access to the Table.

But such as cannot readily, speedily, and pertinently answer him in publike, before two, three, foure, or five hundred people, or either more or fewer, as he pleaseth to call before him at any time, or at least, if they doe not often enough invite him to their houses, (with his wife and children also, if he hath any) yea and sometimes bestow upon him or his, some gifts or presents also, if they be able, and all to be

be so familiar with him, that they may once win his favour and approbation, and then neither look read book, speak, nor act in any respect, which may any wise eclipse it, he will be ready to chide and upbraid them publicly for their ignorance and negligence, in not getting by heart, or at least by rote, some hard taske of such a Catechisme, as he pleaseth to urge upon each one of his Parishioners, and at what rate he pleaseth.

And in case any, who are even prepared to answer sufficiently at home or in private, be subject to blush, because they are not so ready to speak in publike as others, (yea as those perhaps who are neither so able nor of so holy a life, but either ignorant or scandalous, if not both,) do at any time absent themselves, (except for very urgent causes as they must prove, yea and supply also either at another time, or by shewing who is *Melchizedek's* father, by some kinde of oyntment in the hand) he will both begin to raile on them the next first day of the weeke and so continue every Sermon-day, feast-day, and fast-day from his Tub or Pulpit, untill he sufficiently blaze and shame them out of all his conformable society.

And if this were all, it were not so great matter, but yet he proceedeth both further and further, to bring them to repentance for this their hainous sin, even in absenting themselves from the true Church of God, (as he oftensayeth, and which therefore they also must believe, as others do) he and his Lay-Elders, being authorized by both Houses of Parliament, doe issue forth their Warrants for such Delinquent parties to appeare before them at their Church, on some prefixed day, even to answer publicly to such things as are or shall bee objected against them, and thereof they must not faile, as doth appear by the aforesaid Warrant.

If the parties doe appeare, and humble themselves with very low submission, and above all things, not forget either to go themselves, or send some speciall friend a day or two before to each of their houses, whose names are subscribed to the Warrant, but chiefly the Priests house, and both sollicite themselves and their wives, and anoint their hands too, they had better leave all their businesse, and goe a hundred miles penance on their bare feet, then to endure such hard censures as will be prepared for them, chiefly if they be not thus prepared, I say, before they come.

And at the best, though they doe all those aforementioned things, to avoid these mens cruell and bitter censure, and do humble them-

selves on their bare knees before them, and weep and cry, and do all that might seeme to serve a true Church indeed, because the heart (as all other secrett things do) belongeth to God, they must not go yet so scot-free for what is past, but be taught better manners for the time, to come, and that to terrifie both them and all others from disobeying the proud Tythe-monging Clergie, and Orders both of Parliament and Church, (as they call it,) they must stand, if they be able, or otherwise sit in sackcloth, or in a paire of white sheets over their apparell (that they may incur the more worldly shame, & so have the more sorrow for their hainous sin) for three first dayes of the week, during both preaching and prayer time, in a stall of a story high, set in the most publike view of all the people, a little distant from the Pulpit, which they both colour over with black in signe of mourning, entitle and writ in great letters on it: *The place appointed for publike repentance*, that the Priest may have the more sight, audience and attendance of all the people, to raide at his pleasure on those Delinquents and Enequies to his and his Antichristian brethrens State, and that both generally in his Sermon (usually from a Text chosen for that purpose) and particular-ly to the parties one or more, each one by Thou, and his, or her infamous name and odious fact after Sermon, before he command them to sit on their knees.

And at the Church-dissolving on the third day, if either the fault be not so extraordinarie odious or scandalous to the people, as the Priest will endeavour to make it, or that the thus wronged or enslaved party or parties be destitute both of friends and meanes, they are permitted to come downe from that black-schoole, (so deviled by the Black-coats) and take off their sackcloth or sheets, that they may be received to mercie and favour again, and in signe thereof, the Priest and Lay-Elders in the behalfe of the Congregation, doe take them by the hand, and pronounce the sentence of remission to bee according to their repentance, for their so hainous and odious offence against God and his holy Church.

But if the party or parties doe not thus humble themselves, both in body, purie, or estate, to those high Presbyterian Taske-masters, to clothed with Parliamentary authority (as the Bishops and these men their underlings were with real prerogative, then *these* they will be excommunicated and delivered to Satan: yea, and though Satan would be pleased to stay a little on their leisure, and grant them some kinde of favour, yet those his wicked instruments (if it bee possible)

are so much worse then himselfe, that they will scarce grant one hour but give them over also into the hands, of the civill Magistrate, whom will either (after the Scottish Forme, denounce them to the horne; that is, blow a horne at some publike Market-Crosse, or some other the like way, and proclaime them the Kings Rebels, and so) protted against them as his, or at least the Parliaments Rebels, confiscate their estates, and either imprison or banish their persons, if they doe not surrey (specidly before they are made misers and beggars, most humbly submit and make their slavish peace.

Now having given you a little view, and take, before you have full shew and prooffe, of the tyranny in Presbyterian Government, proceeding both from that enslaving Covenant of the three Kingdomes, and that illegall Ordinance of Tythes, because all estates from the highest to the lowest, are by taking that forced Covenant, sworne to abolish Poperie, and also in obeying that unjust Ordinance (by paying of Tythes) to establish Poperie: which is a manifest, full and shamefull contradiction one to another; so that everie one who is forced to take the Covenant, and also forced to breake it, is in that respect perjured, not only by paying Popish or Jewish Tythes, but here by both submitting to Popish or Jewish Priesthood, and maintaining them in their unlawfull offices, contrary both to the intent of the Word of God, and pretence of the Covenant.

For as the Covenant establisheth the Priests, so doth the Ordinance their maintenance, which if it were once taken away, either by just Ordinance or resistance, they would no longer continue: howsoever faithful Ministers dare trust God, for such maintenance, and daily desir as he alloweth them in his Word, yet Ministers of Antichrist and Idolatry, will before they want enough of stinted yearly allowance, they will have it established by the sword, yea, and two many of them had rather have seven years waies in the Kingdomes, then one years want of their base Tythes: though otherwise then, by that Ordinance there is no Law of God nor man, whereby to exact the same, as is evident in the defence of M. Browne against the Person of Stepney, who failing of equitable law, as for default of the Judges of the Exchequer, as to procure them to discharge the Defendants, labours from further pleading, yea and a Warrant also to arrest him, so that now he complaineth on the Judges to the Parliament, who (according to their usual manner) if they either deny or delay justice, he will have recourse to the Army.

And

And whence cometh all these cruell wars in these sad dayes, but meerly by meanes of those Black-coats, as usually in all ages and Nations they doe, by such ravening wolves in sheeps clothing? For, began they not in Scotland through their ambition and covetousnesse? And have they not gone through all England and Ireland, by those Diviners, inchanters, and sooth-sayers meanes? And wee need not yet expect any peace, tranquillity or safety, whiles they sit together and daily devise wicked Decrees, (both at the Synod and Sion Colledge) and all to deceive both King, Parliament, City, and Countrey; yea, and the Army it selfe, (for as well as it is purged) more then King *Pharaoh's* Bed-chamber, can hardly be free of those frogs and vermine, that came out of that bottomelesse pit, whose cruell venome and bitterness *Edwards; Byfelds; Wards, and Loves*, both Books and Sermons, will abundantly witnesse: but a hundred times more of this subject hereafter.

Lancashire, April 1. 1647.

John Ogden.

The true copie of the Warrant.

WEB the Eldership of the Congregation of Prestwich, upon information and notice of some scandall, that you have given whereof we are to take notice, do hereby as officers of the Church of the Lord Iesus Christ, and being hereunto authorized by both Houses of Parliament, require you to appeare before us at restwich-Church, on Thursday being the eight day of this present Aprill, *Anno Dom. 1647* to answer such things as are or shall be objected against you; hereof you may not faile.

This is for *John Ogden*, a servant at *Edward Hewwoods* of Heaton.

Toby furnace.

James Talier.

Peter Sergents.

James Smethurst.

James mrow.

Adam Carkell.

John Scoones.

To his worthy Friend, *M. John Rushworth*, Secretary to his Excellency
Sir Thomas Fairfax

BEING not yet recovered of the hurt, I received during the siege of
Chelster, and having languished through the extremity of my pain
for a long season, which being lately asswaged, I have altogether im-
ployed

ployed my selfe in observation of the present condition of this Countrey of Chester, which is very deplorable, considering how that formerly it hath been the Seat of War, and now is of Tyranny oppression, and arbitrarie government, occasioned partly by the multitudes of Committees for Sequestrations, there being one placed in every Hundred within the said Countrey, with all Receivers, Solicitors, Agents and other Officers thereunto appertaining, who like so many cruell Harpies and Cormorantss, devour the Countrey, no man being free from their snares and gins, if the meanest Agent have the least malice towards any, or intend revenge in anie of their friends causes: but many times lucre of money is the prime adamant.

These Committees being before their first institution into this Body Politique, a generation of hypocriticall and beggarly Zelots, making Religion the cloak for their oppression, and being constituted by vertue of an Ordinance made this present Parliament (as the Gentry say) enabling Sir *William Brereton* with two of the Deputy-Lieutenants and Committees, being of the prime Gentry, to supply the defect of active men to be Sequestrators.

Whereupon a fraternitie of these state-devouring fellowes, some of infamous condition, were created in a tacite manner, by the said Sir *William Brereton's* meanes, who have since so glutted themselves with the rapines and ruines of poore people as well as rich, and contrarie (I suppose) to the sense of the Parliament, have extorted Compositions from those who have not been worth a cow, or ten pounds in their whole substance, many times compounding with them for their Delinquency for 13.s.4.d. and somtimes more or lesse. according to their estates: but *Quo warranto*, I know not, not so much as sparing those who have been under the power of the enemy, at the time of their acting against the Parliament.

So that most of these Committees, who were verie poore and much indebted, have paid their debts, and are readie to make great purchases, unlesse it bee such, who through their prodigality daily consume their *Aurum Tholosanum*, in riotousnesse, adulterie, fornication, and drunkenness: such kind of licentiousnesse as this, the Army desireth not, as appeareth by their Propositions.

These upstart fellowes are by tract of time, so versed in their art, and growne so insolent and arrogant, that they daily affront all the ancient Gentry of the Countrey, who for their integrity, ingenuity, and antiquity, are inferiour to none, (activitie is onely wanting) which ingendreth

gendreth the sufferings of the Countrey under this spoiling generation of vipers, the Pests of the Common wealth, wherein they reside. No County (I ever yet could heare of) suffereth the like calamities and miseries by such fellows, notwithstanding the manifold compositions of Delinquents, they will finde worke enough whilst there is any wealth.

I cannot omit here, a late president of theirs; a poore man that had been in Armes, came in, tooke the soleme League and Covenant, with the Negative Oath, and returned home above a yeare and a halfe since, who being warned to appeare before one of the Committees, attended them almost three quarters of a yeere, and in the end understanding that he was very poor, yet a suitor to a widdow, who was conceived to have a good estate, after his long attendance he was dismissed; the Charge-man telling him, they had nothing to say to him. But so soone as they had notice of his marriage, his wives coffers (by their Agents and Officers) were searched, and 140*l.* in ready money seized upon.

Many are the presidents of their exorbitant and cruell dealings, which I could relate, if I had either time or opportunity: yet I have observed here some other passages, concerning a Court called the Exchequer at Chester, not long since erected upon an old foundation, which is found to bee very rotten. I have conversed with some of the prime Officers thereof, who are verie ignorant and simple, not discerning right from wrong, yet they can claime an unlimited Prerogative, and are not to bee controuled by any Court whatsoever: An unheard of Court, and their proceedings not to be paralleled, sitting everie day, exercising their arbitrary Lawes, and making illegall and extrajudiciall Orders; *De Die in Diem*, and those *coram non Iudice*.

The prime Officer is a Baron or Clerke, whose place (as is said) is in the nature of a Register in the Chancery, and a Cursitor to make Originall Writs. He who now beareth the name of the place, was neither bred a Lawyeer, nor Clerk, but procured one to come from London, out of the Dutchy Office, who when the Raven there had nothing to prey upon, was sent thither to prevent the rats, from eating of the Records, nor to read them or understand them.

So that he being made Deputy Baron, both Baron and Deputy, appearing equally ignorant, the old Malignant Clerkes to the former Baron (being a Delinquent) must be assistants, & execute the place. The office

office of the Baron (it seemeth) was a Delinquent as great as the Baron, but the petty office of a Clerke or Substitute not so. There is equity pretended, yet nothing but iniquity acted.

Orders for stay of all suits above, daily made by the Attorneys and Clerks, as if the Lord Keeper sate every day. There is no Common-Law there, for albeit they have had no Assizes, and so have not the benefit of the Law, yet the Officers are so impudent and ignorant, that they will not suffer any Inhabitant to sue one another in any of the Courts at Westminster, but presently Attachments and I know not what threatnings of Finings, answering upon Interrogatories, and impeaching them for the breach of their Liberties of that County, as if it were high treason to seek for justice elsewhere, there being none to be had there.

Besides all these fore-mentioned grievances, I heare much complaint of pluralities of offices, one being the Constable of the Castle, (the office of a Knight formerly) Steward of Haughton-Fee, Steward of the County-Court, an Attorney in the Exchequer, and Clerk to the Committee for the County, *cum multis aliis*, everie one of which being well mannaged, would take up the whole man.

When this Parliament begun and depressed the Star-Chamber, the high Commission and consistorie Court, I never conceived that (*Sedente Parlamento*) any such arbitrarie Court and proceedings would have been tolerated, the more rationall here say, it had been too soon to have set it up, after the Common-Law had had its course, if not better regulated then formerly, *Quia equitas sequitur, non precedit legem*. But here is nothing but a preposterous Order, *ut vulgo aiunt*, the cart going before the wheels.

Here is likewise great talke and expectation of a chiefe Justice of Chester coming downe, hee is a meer stranger unto mee, yet some say, he was my Lawyer, he will doe me justice; another he is my kinsman, a third, his wife is my kinswoman, a fourth, he is Sir William Breretons creature, and will move him on my behalfe; so that by his practise and alliance, he is generally acquainted, he being borne and bred, and having a bumerous kindred in the County, the least of which heretofore had been a sufficient cause of exception against his admission, and therefore not a settled Iudge in his native Countrey.

Truly Sir, though I am a stranger here, yet am verie forrie for the County, and by some of the most judicious, was desired to present their grievances to you, in regard they may be made knowne to the

Army, and so to the Parliament, that they living in one Kingdome may live under one Law, and one Government, and not bee enslaved.

They have given as ample testimonies of their zeale to the Parliament, as any other people of anie other County in the Kingdome whatsoever, and therefore deserve the Liberties and priviledges of Commons, being that which they principally have hazarded their lives and fortunes for, and not now to suffer themselves to be insnared and flattered, like no other County.

Such like (as before-mentioned) proceedings have so alienated the hearts of the Commons here, that unlesse there be such speedy reliefe, that justice may be done, and the exorbitant power of the extrajudiciall and arbitrary Court of the Exchequer, and of the Committees here, be not regulated or suppressed, a Parliamentarie party will not be found. I doubt not but you will in this seasonable opportunity, communicate these grievances, to the end the oppressed may bee relieved; which is the onely end aimed at by him, who is Sir,

Chester, July 28.

Your Friend and humble

1647.

Servant, N. W.

Notwithstanding your late newes out of Ireland (as I perceived by the Post) I have received lately intelligence, that the Kingdome was never in a worse condition, and likely to be lost, if there be not a speedie settlement of the affaires of this Kingdome, and a supply of men and Ammunition sent over verie speedily, and that a verie considerable number and quantitie. The sicknesse increaseth very much in Chester, the Souldiers have released the Committee, being of the Gentry, who had received no moneyes, but they intend to take their opportunity, and to seize upon the proling Committees of the Hundreds within the County, who are full of their illegall extorted moneyes, as also their Solicitors Agents and Officers.

Wednesday 22. April 1646.

The chiefe businesse that day was about reasons in relation to the Ministers Petition, and a motion being made concerning the great question stated, of their power pleaded to be *Jure Divino*, they came at last to resolution, and pitched upon questions of that exceeding consequence, that it is hoped, it will settle all private jarres, and make us all friends at home, to prevent all new breakings out, and to the great satisfaction of all honest men.

Whereas it is resolved by the House of Commons, that all persons guilty

guilty of notorious and scandalous offences, shall be suspended from the Sacrament of the Lords Supper, the House of Commons desired to bee satisfied by the Assembly of Divines, in these particulars :

1. Whether the parochiall and Congregation Elderships, appointed by Ordinance of Parliament, are *Jure Divino* by the will and appointment of Jesus Christ ?

2. Whether all the Members of the said Elderships are Members thereof, or which of them are *Jure Divino*, by the Will and appointment of Jesus Christ ?

3. Whether the supreme Assemblies or Elderships, *viz.* the Classicall, Provinciaall, and Nationall, whether all or any of them, or which of them are *Jure Divino*, and by the will and appointment of Jesus Christ ?

4. Whether Appeals from Congregationall Elderships to the Classicall, Provinciaall, and Nationall Assemblies, or to any of them, or which of them are *Jure Divino*, and by the will and appointment of Jesus Christ ?

5. Whether Oecumenicall Assemblies are *Jure Divino*, and whether there be Appeals from any of the former Assemblies to the said Oecumenicall Assemblies, are *Jure Divino*, by the will and appointment of Christ ?

6. Whether by the Word of God, the power of judging and declaring what are such notorious and scandalous offences as aforesaid, and of conventing before them, trying and actuall suspending from the Sacrament such offenders accordingly, either in the Congregationall Eldership or Presbyterie, or in any other Eldership of Presbyterie, presented to the Houses, as the advice of the Assembly, and whether such powers are in them onely, or any of them, and in which of them *Jure Divino*, and by the will and appointment of Jesus Christ ?

7. Whether there be any certaine and particular rules expressed in the Word of God, to direct the said Elderships or Presbyteries, or any of them, in the exercise and execution of the powers aforesaid, and which are those Rules ?

8. Is there anie thing contained in the Word of God, that the supreme Magistracie in a Christian State, may not judge and determine what are the aforesaid notorious and scandalous offences, and the manner of suspension from the same, and in what particulars concerning the premisses, is the said supreme Magistracy by the Word of God excluded ?

In answer of these particulars, the House of Commons desires of the Assemblie of Divines, their proofs from Scripture, and to set down the severall texts in the expresse words of the same.

Ordered that every particular Minister of the Assemblie of Divines, that is, or shall be present at the debate of any of these questions, do upon every resolution which shall be presented to this House concerning the same, subscribe his respective name, either with the Affirmative or Negative, as he giveth his Vote: And that those that do dissent from the major part, shall set down their positive opinions, with the expresse Texts of Scripture, upon which their opinion is grounded.

A plaine mans Answer to the former eight Queres, because the Divines themselves could not give any satisfaction to the Parliament therein, though the Parliament pretended to call them together onely for good advice, in these and the like matters of great importance: but they have neither answered these Queres, (now after a yeere and three months both of the Kingdome and Parliaments attendance,) nor given any good advice at all, but both exhausted the Commonwealths substance, and given all the evill counsell which they and hell can devise, for setting all the three Kingdomes by the ears, and each Kingdome among themselves; and yet still they sit peaceably, sely, and richly together, contriving and plotting a new warre.

The answer to the first particular, or Quere.

THis question takes for granted, that which yet is to be proved: For Parochiall Assemblies be not Churches of Christ, as not consisting of beloved of God, called to be Saints, *Rom. 1. 7.* sanctified in Christ Jesus, *1 Cor. 1. 2.* by faith in him, *Act. 26. 18.* such as among whom, some were sometimes ungodly, but are now washed, sanctified, and justified in the name of our Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God, *1 Cor. 6. 11.* and are therefore the Church of God, *2 Cor. 1. 1.* being Saints and faithfull in Christ Jesus, *Ephes. 1. 1.* and so a brotherhood, *1 Cor. 5. 11. 1 Pet. 2. 9.* a chosen Generation, a royall Priesthood, an holy Nation, a people whom God hath owned to shew forth his grace, who hath called them out of darknesse into his marvellous light, unto whom he hath only given of divine right by the will and appointment of Jesus Christ, all spirituall Officers requisite to govern them in that gracious state of heaven upon earth. *Ephes. 4. 11.*

Therefore the Parochiall and Congregationall Eldershops (taking Parishes for Congregations) appointed by Ordinance of Parliament, are not *Jure Divino*, by the will and appointment of Jesus Christ, but

a meere humane device, which never came into his heart, and whereof there is nothing (so much as once mentioned) in the Scriptures, (they being Officers and Elders onely over wicked and ungodly Parishes, such as being unrighteous, Fornicators, Idolators, Adulterers, Effeminate, Theeves, covetous, Drunkards, Revilers, Extortioners, shall not inherit the Kingdome of God, 1 *Cor.* 6. 9, 10. nor ought to declare Gods Statutes, or take his Covenant in their mouthes, seeing they hate to be reformed, *Psal.* 50. 16, 17.) so that they are the vain persons, and dissemblers, the Congregation of evill doers, and the wicked, with whom none of the godly more then *David*, will go in company, but do altogether hate and forsake, so soone as they can discern them, *Psal.* 26. 4, 5. For they have come out from among them, (and doe daily more and more as God communicates light) leave touching the unclean thing, least they should partake of their sinnes, and so receive of their plagues, 2 *Cor.* 6. 17. *Rev.* 18. 4. by provoking the most jealous God to take vengeance of their inventions, *Psal.* 99. 8.

To the second, the Parishes (being no Churches of Christ,) none of the members of the Elderships are at all *Iure Divino*, by the appointment of Jesus Christ, but are base constitutions of men, arising out of the earth, *Rev.* 13. 11. and having but a shew of wisdom in will worship and humilitie, *Col.* 2. 23.

To the third, supreme Assemblies over Assemblies are as strange in Scripture, as supreme brethren over brethren: be not ye called Rabbi, nor Doctor, for one is your Master and Doctor even Christ, and all ye are brethren; and call no man your father upon the earth, for one is your father which is in heaven, *Mat.* 23. 8, 9, 10, and (saith James) my brethren be not many Masters, *1 *Jer.* 3. 1.* It is therefore considerable, though Christ was often asked, and it was a great dispute among the Disciples, who should be the greatest: yet he alwaies suppressed that question, never telling them of supreme Brethren, or supreme Assemblies, but said it shall not be so among you, *Luk.* 9. 46.

Therefore supreme Assemblies are not *Iure Divino*, by the will and appointment of Jesus Christ, but by the same will, are cast out and forbidden. And as to Classically, Provinciaall and Nationall Assemblies, they are all humane inventions, not hard of in Scripture, and contrary to the freedoms which every Church of Christ have, no one Church being subject to another in the Primitive time, which patterne these times aime at, and will so continue untill the Judgement of the great day.

To the fourth, when neither the Parishes, nor Congregationall Elderships,

Elderships, nor anie of the Classicall, Provinciall, nor Nationall Assemblies can be proved to bee of divine right, but meerly of humane frame and constitution, the appeals to them, and from one to another, must needs be of the same vaine mould, wicked and fond device.

To the fifth, Oecumenicall Assemblies no more then the former, are of Gods appointing, but an invention of the Man of Sin, to make all the world wonder at the beast, who had the wound of a sword, and did live, *Rev.* 13.3. For Heathenisme (the first Beast) being wounded by a sword, out of the mouth of Jesus Christ, healed it selfe again by pressing the Heathenish Uniformity, under the vizard of Popish conformity still imposed and kept up by Popish counsells; the patterne whereof these counsells now still follow, under the new title of Assemblies: And therefore all appeals to any of them, are meerly humane, hellish, and diabolicall.

To the sixth, the will and appointment of Jesus Christ hath setled this power onely upon his owne Church, tell the Church (saith hee) *Mat.* 18.17. and not the Presbytery thereof, distinguished from the Church, and therefore these Presbyteries not being of the Church, and yet claiming such power, as distinguished from the Church, have nothing, but by Satan and mans appointment.

To the seventh, there are no rules at all in the Word of God, to direct the said Elderships and Presbyteries in the execution of any power, seeing none of them are from God, nor have anie power from him.

To the eight, the Word of God makes no distinction between a Christian and a Heathen Magistrate, as a Magistrate, this distinction was made by the Pope, to take away the Magistracy of those who were not Christians in his sense, and whosoever holds up this distinction, have yet remaining in them that spirit of Poperie: For Christ is the onely and alone Magistrate in the Church, *Mat.* 23.8,9,10. bee ye not called Rabbi, for one is your Master, even Christ, and all ye are brethren, *1 Cor.* 8. 6. to us there is but one God, the father of whom are all things, and we in him, and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him; so as Christians in the Church are but brethren like other members, onely to give aid and assistance, but not Lords or Masters to command or controule.

Howsoever Christian Magistrates as well as Heathen Magistrates, be stiled Gods and Lords in the word of truth, yet they have no more power in the Church, as Magistrates, then the Heathen Magistrates have,

have, yea and though they be also members of the Church, they have onely such power as the meanest members have; and yet most Magistrates do assume, usurp, or pretend to have more power then they, by attributing to themselves the title of Christians, whiles most of their practices are more repugnant to the course of Christianitie, then many practices of the very Heathen, like those of the Jewes in the daies of King Manasseh, (2 Chron. 33.) whereof all who endeavour to live godly in Christ Jesus, where they can either command, prohibite, or persecute, have (yet still even now in Parliament-time, as our Predicessors have had for hundreds of yeares) most grievous and wofull experience.

Some of the sober sort of young men and Apprentices of London seasonable and reasonable advice, to all the plaine men and youth both of the Citie and Countrey, concerning the English Priests.

IT is credibly reported by some of our trusty friends, being in Scotland, at the beginning of the late warres there, that a number of the plaine men who had been forth in divers battells in the North, would not go to the South against the Kings first Army, untill the Black-coats of that place went first, because it was onely their turne, which (after much debate and great threatning) was accordingly done, onely with this falacie, they procured leave secretly of the Magistrates to go under no Commanders, therefore they only shew themselves on horse-back at the place, and looked a farre off untill the businesse was over, but the honest men went a foot, bore the heat of the day, and never saw those their blind guides, untill they all returned home.

Now all that we out of our affection to you, and all the Commons of England, both for your and their good, doe inferre from this commendable example of such plaine men as our selves in our neighbour Nation, tendeth to the very same effect; we even wish and advise that ye may doe the like upon the first occasion, not only in a part of this Nation, but throughout all the Cities and Counties thereof; only with this difference and caution, that ye may make your bargain sure: then the Scottish plaine men did, even that ye be not deceived by the Magistrates double dealing, as they were, but plead (as they did very well) that it is not your turne, yee being so often forth alreadie, and have spent both abundance of blood and treasure in the late warres, whereas the Clergie have been at no charges, neither have they been forth at all to fight, (though the quarrell be their own) but as false Prophets to run unsent, and speak lies in the name of the Lord.

Ye.

Ye know, when the wise men of Babel in the daies of King *Nebuchadnezzar*, could not both declare and interpret his dreame, he commanded to put them to death, and so would have done with Daniel, & his countrey men, if it had not pleased God to grant him wisdom beyond all these wise men, even to do what was required, that God might be glorified, and he advanced for the good of his people: and seeing the brethren of those babilonish brats, and wicked brood of Antichristian priests (whose covenant they have both taken, and vexed all others therewith since) decreed in the sixt reason of that book, called the Scots law, *blasphemy* in coming into England, when they came with a powerfull army, to force the calling of this Parliament (as one of the best acts that ever they did, if the Parliament it selfe had beene good): that there should not be a Papist, a separatist nor sectary any more mentioned, so soone as their blessed and glorious reformation should be accomplished: so they have sought by all possible means, that Satan their Master or they could devise ever since, to make good that wicked decree; and move all Magistrates whom they can seduce, either to roote out, enslave, ruite or banish all who will not submit unto them, both in countenancing their humane worship, and paying their Popish tithes.

And seeing it is so, were it not very agreeable to equitie and reason, that Magistrats would once be so just, as to pay them home with the same measure themselves, which they allot to others? And did not *Nebuchadnezzar* King of Babel kill all the wise men of Babel, only because they could neither declare nor interpret his dreams? but those English magicians are many degrees worse. 1. Because they profess far better things then ever the wise men of Babel did, and therefore are the more inexcusable. 2. They continually contrive, plot and act mischief, yea and stirre up the people in all their preachments against all, who have any sparkle or dreame of goodnesse, and will not both follow and maintaine them in all their wicked wayes. And 3. Seeing those Babalonish wise men were put to a far harder task, upon penaltie of their lives, then ever these English wise men were put unto, even to declare both the Kings dream, and the interpretation thereof; whereas our sooth-sayers had the dream, (or Parliament *Querees*,) not only shewed them, but have kept the same in writing almost 16 moneths beside them, yea and had nothing else to doe (saving only their continuall devising some new divinations,) but to declare the interpretation (or answer) thereof.

